

Brown Bag It With Books
Joan's Mystery Picks
July 12, 2012

CORRIS, Peter

Cliff Hardy, ex-army, law student dropout, insurance company investigator turned private eye, embodies the best aspects of Australian life - tolerance, classlessness, a vigorous urban and rural culture - while despising the greed and the conservatism that are constantly threatening to undercut what he sees as "real Australia".

Inevitably drawn into the sphere of the people he deplores, Hardy struggles to resolve his cases while remaining true to his own threatened values. The professional challenges spill over into his personal life where he is never on firm ground.

CUTLER, Judith

Lina Townend is an orphan with a history of self-harm who's trying hard to do the right thing and become known as a respectable antique dealer. In partnership with her old friend, Griff Tripp, she restores china and occasionally sells off items for her father, the disreputable Lord Elham, to provide him with champagne.

The series, set in Kent, is rich in atmosphere, information about antiques and rogues in that field, and the trials of not fitting in to any recognized group.

GRABENSTEIN, Chris

Set in Sea Haven, along the Jersey shore, this is a series that shows the evolution of a friendship between two very different men.

A former military policeman in Iraq, John Ceepak has brought his strength, crime-solving skills and morality to the beachside town. Assisting Ceepak is 24-year-old Danny Boyle, a part-time summer cop who joined the force largely to impress college girls.

HAMILTON, Steve

Alex McKnight is a retired Detroit cop living in Chippewa County, Michigan - a small town near Sault St. Marie in the Upper Peninsula.

McKnight was forced into retirement after a mentally disturbed man shot him and his partner with an Uzi. McKnight lived, but with a bullet lodged near his heart. His partner didn't make it. McKnight finds himself living in a

cabin his dad built near a logging road and working as a private investigator for a local lawyer.

The first in this series was a 1999 Edgar Award winner.

HOUSEWRIGHT, David

Rushmore McKenzie is a retired cop, an unexpected millionaire and, occasionally, an unlicensed private investigator in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area of Minnesota.

JOHNSON, Craig

After twenty-four years as sheriff of Absaroka County, located at the base of the Big Horn Mountains and next to the Northern Cheyenne Reservation in Wyoming, Walt is looking for a quiet period to finish out his tenure but instead finds himself embroiled in a baffling case. With lifelong friend Henry Standing Bear, Deputy Victoria Morretti, and a cast of characters tragic and humorous enough to fill in the vast emptiness of the high plains, Walt Longmire is filling his life with work only a year after being widowed. “Longmire” is now on A & E television.

O’CONNELL, Carol

Psychologically damaged almost beyond imagining, Mallory is an orphaned street kid who survived on ferocity, cunning, and forlorn hope. She is captured and adopted by Helen and Louis Markowitz, a homicide detective and his wife, central figures of all the novels in spite of the fact that both are dead before the books begin.

Mallory, never “Kathy”, except to the members of Markowitz’s poker group, is scarily bright, fastidious and a technological wizard. Rumpled Sergeant Riker, an aging alcoholic, tries to keep Mallory safe within the police department (she’s not good at interoffice politics,) honoring his duty and loyalty to Louis Markowitz.

STABENOW, Dana

Kate Shugak is an Aleut who lives on a 160-acre homestead in a National Park in Alaska. Her roommate is a half-wolf, half-husky dog named Mutt. Her nearest neighbors are a bull moose and a grizzly sow.

She returns to the Park after a stint working as an investigator for the State of Alaska. Her grandmother, Emaa, is a major figure in the tribal affairs in the Park and tries to involve Kate in them also. Kate is not interested. She would prefer to live her own life, in her own way, but events intervene.

